

of sufficient magnitude that they could finance the rebuilding of the country of Iraq are now expected to barely cover the operating costs of Iraq's government ministries and the expenses of the Interim Council.

What more evidence do any of us need to be convinced that the time has come for other governments to be welcomed as participants in rebuilding Iraq and to reach out and to ask them to join in that effort?

I strongly believe it is time for the Congress to weigh in and to require the administration to address two basic questions: How do administration officials plan to minimize American death and casualties? How do they intend to minimize the expenditures of American tax dollars that will have to be diverted to this cause at the expense of other critically important programs in our own Nation, such as to assist first responders in keeping us secure at home, programs to provide for prescription drugs for our seniors, and programs to improve our schools so no child is truly left behind?

If history is any guide, the only way the administration will feel compelled to come up with answers is if we in the Congress—the coequal legislative branch of Government—place some conditions on the \$20 billion in reconstruction moneys.

To me it seems pretty straightforward what needs to be done to lower the risks and costs of current participation in Iraq. It is called the United Nations. It is called the international community. We need to invite them to be a part of this effort. That is why I believe the Congress should link the provision of reconstruction moneys to the passage of a United Nations resolution that places responsibility for rebuilding Iraq where it belongs—on us and the international community as a whole. To get such a resolution, obviously the administration must approach other member states with a credible proposal, one that gives the United Nations some measure of authority over the civilian administration of the country while also charging it with mobilizing more resources from member states. Clearly, the United States should retain command of any ongoing military operations in Iraq. But on political, economic, and civic reconstruction, we better involve other nations fairly quickly. We cannot do this alone. The American people will not support this over the long term. If we don't invite them to participate and to help us, we are going to find it very difficult with each passing day to find anyone who will join us in this effort.

I don't understand the reluctance on the part of the administration to turn over the civilian administration of the country to an international body. There is certainly ample precedent for doing so. Not only would it lower the profile of our presence in that country, but it would also likely unleash additional resources and cooperation both regionally and internationally, bring

Iraq around to the kind of nation we would like to see, and truly deal with the problems of terrorism globally.

The Congress has to do it unless the administration decides on its own to change course. If we don't speak up in these coming days, if we just provide a blank check and a vote for \$87 billion with nothing further to be said, we will not have anyone to blame but ourselves in the coming days if this present policy continues to collapse. And I believe it will.

It is time for us to stop sitting on the sidelines. Under the able leadership of Senator LUGAR, the Foreign Relations Committee has been carrying out careful oversight in Iraq. The Foreign Relations Committee now has the responsibility to develop some legislative proposals—perhaps along the lines I have outlined for people to bring to the table—in order to influence the contents of the legislative package we will be asked to vote on in the coming days. I look forward to working with my colleagues—Democrats and Republicans—because I know very deeply the concerns I am expressing publicly are shared by many in this Chamber regardless of party, regardless of ideology, and regardless of which States we represent.

There is a growing concern that we have this wrong and that we have to get it right soon. Here is an opportunity that may not come again to us for many months to try to set this on a different course.

We are at a very special and historic moment. We cannot and must not sit idly by when we know multilateralizing the reconstruction and democratization of Iraq is the right thing to do. It is the right thing for Iraq. It is the right thing for the United States of America. But it is time we in the legislative branch, the coequal branch, step up and act in the interests of our people and other like-minded people around the globe.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DETROIT SHOCK WIN WOMEN'S NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, last night the Detroit Shock won the Women's National Basketball Association Championship, defeating the two-time defending champion Los Angeles Sparks 83-78. This tremendous accomplishment is all the more special because the Shock rose from the worst record in the league last year to champions this year.

Over the course of this year's season, the Shock won a league-best 25 games,

a year after losing a league-worst 23 games. The Shock's victory is also the first time in the WNBA's 7-year history that neither Houston nor Los Angeles won the championship.

The enthusiasm and support for the Shock by the people of Detroit and Michigan was clearly demonstrated by the fact that last night's game was attended by a WNBA record crowd of over 22,000 people.

The Shock completed their incredible run from last to first with the leadership of Coach Bill Laimbeer, finals Most Valuable Player Ruth Riley's career-high 27-point performance, as well as the strong play of Swin Cash, who finished with 13 points, 12 rebounds, and 9 assists. These performances were supported by Deanna Nolan's 17 points, and Rookie of the Year Cheryl Ford's 10 points and 11 rebounds.

It was a tremendously exciting game throughout. The Los Angeles Sparks erased a 14-point deficit in the first half, and an 11-point deficit in the second half, and even had a 3-point lead with less than 4 minutes to go. But with less than a minute left, Deanna Nolan, from Flint, MI, secured the Shock's lead when she hit a 3-point shot to give them a 75-73 lead. Then Cheryl Ford hit 2 free throws, and it was a 4-point game with 43 seconds remaining. In the end, the Shock were victorious in what was the highest-scoring WNBA finals game in history.

The 2003 WNBA champion Detroit Shock will celebrate its first-ever WNBA championship with fans tonight at The Palace of Auburn Hills. This is Detroit's first professional basketball championship since our Pistons won back-to-back championships in 1988 and 1989. Shock Head Coach Bill Laimbeer was actually cocaptain of those Pistons teams, and in 1988 it was the Los Angeles Lakers—the Los Angeles Sparks' NBA counterparts—that Detroit defeated to win the championship.

I know our colleagues will join me and Senator STABENOW in congratulating the Detroit Shock on their championship and looking forward to their drive to repeat next year.

Mr. President, it is also my fervent hope that the Shock's worst-to-first season will be an inspiration to the Detroit Tigers next year.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAGEL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator withhold for just a brief minute?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I withdraw my request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—HOUSE MESSAGE TO ACCOMPANY S. 3 AND EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:40 the Senate resume consideration of the House message to accompany S. 3, the partial-birth abortion ban bill; provided further that time on the motion to disagree be limited to 1 hour equally divided in the usual form; further, that following the use or yielding back of the time the Senate proceed to a vote on the motion with all other provisions of the agreement remaining in effect.

I further ask unanimous consent that following the vote, the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consecutive votes on the following nominations on today's Executive Calendar: Calendar Nos. 352, 347, 348, 350, and 351.

Further, I ask unanimous consent that there be 2 minutes equally divided between the two leaders or their respective designees prior to each vote; further, that following the votes the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the 30 minutes will begin on our side in 10 minutes. I want to make sure the RECORD reflects that Senator BOXER will control that time. There are a number of Senators who wish to speak at that time. But I ask if my friend, the Senator from Pennsylvania, would allow her, Senator BOXER, to have the last 10 minutes to close debate on this matter?

Mr. SANTORUM. Sure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the Senator's request? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would also say the Senator from Illinois who was here was going to speak for up to 8 minutes. Prior to this beginning, I wonder if he still wishes to speak, the Senator from Illinois?

I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Illinois be recognized until 1:40, when the debate on partial-birth abortion is finalized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Senator from Illinois.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I will be very brief, but I wanted to make a point on the RECORD relative to some messages and information I received from my State which I would like to share with my colleagues.

During the month of August, I went back across the State of Illinois and

visited with a lot of people, including chambers of commerce, labor unions, families, and community leaders. I would say for the third or fourth consecutive year, the report I received from businesses in particular in my State was identical. When I asked them what their major concern was, time and again they came back and said the same thing. It is the No. 1 concern of businesses across America when it comes to the cost of doing business and competitiveness. It is the No. 1 concern of labor unions across America when it comes to fair compensation for their employees. It is the No. 1 concern of more and more families across the United States as they realize how vulnerable they are.

What is that concern? The cost of health insurance. Time and time again that issue resurfaces. I have to tell my constituents in Illinois, my friends in business and labor, that I understand what they are saying. But this is an issue which has gone unaddressed in Washington in the time I have been here, for the last 7 years, in the Senate. It is as if the people in the Senate, the men and women like myself who are talking back home, are not listening or at least they are not coming back here and saying: What can we do about this?

There are some who have an automatic reaction and say: Don't jump in with a Government solution. The market will solve this problem.

I would say to them that the market is addressing this problem. The market of health insurance in America is reducing coverage, reducing their exposure to risk, and raising costs to increase their profitability.

What I am about to say is not just anecdotal evidence of a trip around Illinois this year or for the last 4 years, but it is the same thing we found when the Kaiser Family Foundation released their annual report on health insurance across America, and I commend it to those following this debate: KFF.ORG, KFF.ORG. Go to that Web site and you will find this report on the cost of health insurance.

According to this report, monthly premiums for employer-sponsored health insurance went up 13.9 percent between 2002 and 2003, the third successive year of double-digit increases in the cost of health insurance, while inflation in general is going up 2.2 percent. Of course workers are paying more out of pocket and receiving less coverage.

Small businesses are getting hampered if they can afford health insurance. If they can't afford it, frankly, they are on their own, and that is not a good outcome here. The question is, Why are these rates going up?

When the Kaiser Foundation asked the businesses what they thought, the No. 1 reason was the cost of prescription drugs going through the roof.

I talked to the CEO of the biggest company in Illinois during my August recess. They are self-insured for health. He told me they are now spending more

money on prescription drugs for their employees and retirees than they are for the rest of their health insurance costs—more on prescription drugs. Prescription drugs are skyrocketing in cost. We are doing nothing about it, either in the prescription drug benefit for seniors or in any other legislation.

The second reason, of course, for the cost of health insurance going up is the cost of hospital services. So you might ask, What about the health insurance companies? How are they doing? That is interesting.

The Weiss Ratings, an insurance rating agency, looked at the profits for 519 health insurance companies. They evaluated these companies and they learned that between 2001 and 2002, of these 519 health insurance companies, their profits went up 77 percent. The same review had shown a 25-percent increase in the years 2000 to 2001. And the trend is continuing this year.

Have you seen the ads for PacificCare Health Systems where the whale jumps out of the water and splashes in? In the second quarter of 2003, PacificCare Health Systems, which serves 12 million Americans, reported a profit increase of 260 percent. UnitedHealth Group reported a 35-percent increase. Aetna reported a 28-percent increase.

These are extraordinary profit margins in the midst of a recession in America. They are profit margins at the expense of businesses, their employees, of labor unions and their members, and families across America. For my colleagues who say it is hands off, Government cannot get involved in this debate, this is an issue to be resolved in the marketplace, I remind you again it is being resolved in the marketplace as health insurance premiums skyrocket and coverage disappears.

A friend of mine with a small business in downstate Illinois and 10 employees had 1 employee whose wife had a baby who was sick. The baby incurred great costs at the hospital. The next year, when his small business went in for their health insurance, they were told their premiums would double—a 100-percent increase from one year to the next because of one claim.

This man and his wife had this company in their family for generations. They called together the 10 employees and said: We cannot do it. We cannot pay it anymore. We are going to give you the money which we would have put in your monthly paycheck each month for your health insurance. You have to go try to find coverage.

The family with the sick baby could not find any. The others went out and did the best they could. I asked the owner of the company, who was genuinely saddened when it reached that point, what did it mean? He said: I'm in the open market for health insurance. It meant at his age, about 58-years-of-age, and his wife about the same, that whatever they make a claim for under their health insurance policy this year will be excluded from next year.